

INTERNATIONAL STATEMENT INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF MADRE DE DIOS (PERU) AT COP21 IN PARIS

“WE HAVE TO SAVE THE FOREST AND TERRITORIES OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF MADRE DE DIOS (PERU)”

Indigenous Organizations of the Amazon Basin, the COORDINATOR OF INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS OF THE AMAZON RIVER BASIN - COICA, the INTERETHNIC ASSOCIATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PERUVIAN RAINFOREST - AIDSEP AND ITS REGIONAL BASES, the REGIONAL COORDINATOR OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF SAN LORENZO - CORPI SL, the REGIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES THE CENTRAL JUNGLE - ARPI SC, the NATIVE FEDERATION OF MADRE DE DIOS AND TRIBUTARIES - FENAMAD, the COUNCIL HARAKBUT, YINE AND MACHIGUENGA - COHARYIMA and the EXECUTOR OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE CONTRACT OF THE AMARAKAERI COMMUNAL RESERVE - ECA-RCA, indigenous organizations that defend the claim of their territorial rights and the conservation of forests in the Amazon, made known and clear to the international community that is participating in UNFCCC - COP21, the following:

1. We Indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios and our contribution to restrain climate crisis

Climate change is a phenomenon caused by human activity, especially for industries in developed countries which is causing negative impacts on the planet affecting everyone. We, Indigenous Peoples of Madre de Dios, are one of the most important key actors who are not dependent on the global economy, but on our territory and our forests, means of production and reproduction of all the natural resources surrounding us, and lung of the world which contributes to the mitigation and adaptation to climate change.

Our ancestors were born in the forest where they developed their culture and sustainable livelihoods with the ecosystem, creating an interdependent and indivisible link Nature-Man, with a holistic and comprehensive vision of the territory they received and our future generations will inherit, guaranteeing a life in harmony and fullness with nature.

2. Indigenous territories as "conservation areas"

Indigenous Peoples own their forests and at the same time have been responsible for the **Millennial Conservation** thereof. One example is that their territories still hold most important remnants of Primary Forest and biodiversity on the planet earth, safeguarding the ecosystem functions necessary for life.

Thus, it is important to recognize, preserve, rescue, and strengthen the cultural and natural heritage of Indigenous Peoples, expressed in their ancestral knowledges, since they are a key element for development strategies that are held to give solutions to the major problems facing the world, one of them being Global Climate Change. These peoples have developed an indigenous science about conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for their adaptation to climate change. They

have often developed and adopted complex methods and techniques to sustainably manage their environment.

3. What is happening in Madre de Dios region?

Madre de Dios region is one of the most important ecosystems of the Amazon basin. It is also recognized as **“The Capital of Biodiversity”**, with a variety of natural resources and many potentialities for its sustainable use.

However, despite the global climate context, the development of Madre de Dios region is being focused merely on the exploitation of alluvial gold, which is generating social and environmental problems since the decade of the 1980's. This is happening not only in Madre de Dios region, but also in the central jungle of Peru, Yuyapichis river zone and the buffer zone of El Sira Communal Reserve, where illegal mining of alluvial gold affect indigenous territories in the area. In addition, the construction and paving of the Interoceanic South Highway, which has not benefited the local people living in the forests, is increasing deforestation, colonization migration and irreversible socio-environmental conflicts.

Likewise, the central and local governments promote unplanned construction of regional integration roads without accomplishing with the technical and legal relevant requirements, especially those concerning the consultation of indigenous peoples, contradicting international environmental commitments. This situation affects indigenous territories and promotes conflict situation and misgovernment. Therefore, we, Indigenous Peoples of Madre de Dios, believe that the construction of unplanned roads will benefit neither the people of Madre de Dios, nor the country, but will promote the invasion of indigenous territories and increased pressure on forests.

In addition, the granting of concessions and the promotion of hydrocarbon activities in Madre de Dios region, responsible for deforestation, degradation and destruction of the lands, are inconsistent with forest conservation policy, as it is happening now with our indigenous brothers of the central jungle of Peru where are being promoted concessions and infrastructures for hydroelectric power plants without consultation or consent of the indigenous peoples of the area. This uncontrolled growth of investment in hydrocarbons and infrastructure is supported by the adoption of rules as the "environmental package" (laws from the Peruvian government that promote investments without environmental control). Thus, the Peruvian state commits a climate aggression, compounding the loss of forests, necessary for the life of peoples and to curb global warming.

4. What do Indigenous People of Madre de Dios region pose in the COP21?

We, Indigenous peoples of Madre de Dios, are aware that, from the indigenous vision of the comprehensive forest management, the climate crisis can be stopped. We believe that Madre de Dios region can be a source of change in the regional vision of the Amazon Basin, with international recognition as the most important provider of ecosystem services in the region. For these reasons, we propose the following:

- **Integral land security for indigenous peoples:** Recognition, respect and up-dated titles promoted by the State through policies, plans and regulations executed with willingness and commitment.

- **Development programs and projects with an integral approach have to be promoted and integral community-based development plans implemented** valuing integrity and interconnection of ecosystem functions and services, ensuring the sustainability of forests and the survival of the indigenous peoples.
- **Strengthen and implement funds dedicated to indigenous peoples** to reinforce their institutions and governance proposals included in the Integral Community-Based Development Plans, prioritizing the implementation of the proposal Amazonian Indigenous REDD+ (AIR).
- **Implement the Amazonian Indigenous REDD+ (AIR) in Amarakaeri Communal Reserve and other communal reserves such as the Ashaninka, Matsiguenga and El Sira**, as an alternative proposal based on traditional knowledge to mitigate and adapt to climate change and contribute in a transparent and reliable way to reduce greenhouse gases emissions.

Finally, as defenders of the Amazon, we demand the Peruvian government and the governments of the world participating in COP21 to make binding agreements that include the rights-based approach of Indigenous Peoples, recognizing them and apply them; likewise to finance with climate funds the strategies proposed by indigenous peoples for the conservation and sustainable use of the Amazon forests.

París, December 5, 2015.